Safety Clam™ Tool Protects Pipeline During Bridge Concrete Support Replacement

By Allan Edwards

Maintenance and repair work is regularly carried out in areas that contain in-service pipelines. While necessary, this maintenance must be performed delicately to avoid damaging the existing pipeline infrastructure. Yet even with meticulous prevention efforts, third party-inflicted damage remains the leading cause of pipeline damage today. As such, operators and contractors take extreme care to protect existing lines when performing sensitive work. A contractor in Florida chose to err on the side of caution when performing a job that included replacing a concrete support underneath a bridge located a short distance from an in-service pipeline.



A Risky Replacement

After a routine assessment, several concrete supports situated underneath a bridge in Florida were determined to need replacement. This seemingly straightforward job was complicated by the fact that an above-ground pipeline ran directly parallel to the bridge. The 24-inch pipeline's proximity to the bridge meant that it would be unwise to conduct the replacement of the concrete supports without first taking precautions to mitigate the risk of damage to the line, as heavy machinery would be required.

Mitigating Risks: Adding a Line Strike Buffer

Wishing to avoid complications, the contractor overseeing the replacement reached out to Allan Edwards to discuss acquiring several Safety Clam™ tools for the project. The primary purpose of the Safety Clam tool, a new product developed by Allan Edwards, is to temporarily protect exposed or excavated pipelines from line strike damage during periods of high-risk work. The hinged tool is designed to fit around the pipe, fully encasing vulnerable sections for an added layer of protection. Once sensitive work is completed, the tool is removed and stored for repeat use.





Safeguarding the Pipeline

Allan Edwards received the customer inquiry and acted quickly to provide a quote for five Safety Clam tools as requested. Once the customer approved the quote, Allan Edwards promptly manufactured the necessary tools and shipped them directly to the customer's job site in the week following the inquiry. The Safety Clam tools were installed on the 24-inch pipeline at various sections and remained attached throughout the duration of the concrete support replacement project. Once the job was completed, the tools were removed from the line and stored for future use. The Safety Clam tools provided much-needed protection for the pipeline without impeding the progress of this critical bridge maintenance project.

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